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SPECIAL ISSUE – MAX DEUTSCHER

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Introduction

This collection of papers arose in the wake of an Invited Symposium for the IAPL Conference in Melbourne in 2008. The Symposium consisted of papers on the work of Genevieve Lloyd and Max Deutscher, followed by their responses. Subsequent to that conference those who had presented papers on Deutscher's work (Michelle Boulous Walker, Paul Formosa, and Daniel Nicholls) wished to expand what they had written, and to place it in a wider context. In collaboration with *Crossroads* the present collection was engineered. In addition to two new papers by Marguerite La Caze, John Sutton and Carl Windhorst, Max Deutscher agreed to submit four previously unpublished papers for the collection and to republish one on remembering – his longest standing interest. Included here is the introduction to the Deutscher papers at the Invited Symposium, which explains the various contexts of Deutscher's writings and gives an insight into the three papers presented at the time. Deutscher's reworked response to those papers – now extended to include comments on the new papers – appears at the end of this issue.

The reader will appreciate in these papers the very different voices of each of the authors. Indeed, Deutscher himself, though his style is always identifiable, varies his writing style from one paper to the next. This variance is perhaps one of the features which mark Deutscher as an exceptional philosopher. Deutscher encourages experimentation, acknowledging that each of us speaks our voice on different backgrounds of history and experience. I have been fortunate to have had Deutscher as my teacher since the early 80s. I recall remarking to him early on that I thought I was an absolutist. He just said, "Oh

yes, it's common to go through that phase." That statement set me on a course of thinking, exploration and study: far from being embarrassed at my naivety, I set myself a project of discovery. Of course he didn't mention that I would go through other phases and other *isms* – I would need to discover that fact for myself.

Deutscher does not seek to control the thinking of others. To do that would be to constrain thinking – it would no longer be thinking. He is not backward, however, in pointing out instances where thinking might be improved: he is thinking for himself, not on behalf of others. Yet, in this thinking for himself he is not miserly by any stretch of the imagination; far from it – he is the most generous of thinkers. For he is mindful that thinking is a human endeavor – more than its expression within any constricted conception of mind, and more, even, than the workings of his particular mind – and has a passionate concern with how people treat each other.

I wish to acknowledge the *Crossroads* editorial board for their good judgment in publishing this Special Issue on the work of such a distinguished and distinctive Australian philosopher; someone who has been influential in helping his students and others to confidently negotiate the myriad pathways of philosophy. He also has his detractors but I'm sure Max would say: 'Well, that's how it goes.'

My appreciation also goes to Hugh Silverman for providing the stage setting for this issue through his Invited Symposia at the IAPL conference and to those who kindly agreed to review the papers.